THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Three Special Economic zones (SEZs) are operational in Andhra Pradesh namely Vishakhpatnam Special Economic Zone (for Multiproduct), Divi's Laboratories Limited (Pharmaceuticals) and Wipro Limited (for IT/ITES).

(b) No, Sir. Only foundation stone was laid by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on 27.5.2006.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) These cities have been identified by the State Government for being promoted as Tier-II cities in the State and Nodal Officers for hand-holding, interacting with the industry and providing requisite facilitations, with special package of incentives for locating the IT units in Tier II hubs.

Steps to increase exports

† 878. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present quantum of imports is higher than the exports;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the import rate has registered about 31 per cent increase, in comparison to the last years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, and the effective steps taken by Government to increase exports, in comparison to imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Based upon the provisional estimates available, the total imports during the first quarter of the current fiscal i.e. April-June 2006-07 are valued at US $ 40281.28 million as against exports of US $ 27671.93 million. The imports, during the month of June 2006 are valued at US $ 13763.86 million against exports of US $ 9967.08 million. In rupee terms, the imports during June 2006 indicate a growth of 31-02% over imports during June 2005.

(c) The details of India's foreign trade during the last three years are as under:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(US $ Million)

Year	Exports		Imports		Trade
	Total	Growth Rate	Total	Growth Rate	Deficit
2003-04	63843	21.10	78150	27.25	-14307
2004-05	83536	30.85	111517	42.70	-27981
2005-06(P)	102725	22.97	142416	27-71	-39691

(P) Provisional Data

Export promotion is a constant endeavour of the Government. A number of measures have been taken recently to further boost exports. These *inter-alia* include bringing into force the SEZ Act 2005 to trigger a larger flow of investment in infrastructure and productive capacity; giving a major thrust to procedural simplification to reduce transaction cost of exporters and signing regional trade agreements to leverage exports in line with India's comparative advantage. Besides, a number of fresh initiatives have been taken in the Foreign Trade Policy (2006-07) to further boost the exports including Focus Product scheme, Focus Market Scheme, Vishesh Krishi and Gram Udyog Yojna, Duty Free Import Authorisation Scheme and a number of measures for Gems & Jewellery sector.

Increase in sick industries

879. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an increase in the number of industries declared as sick industries during the last three years;

(b) whether any assessment has been made about these industries, which are mainly becoming sick; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to arrest such trends?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), a total of 156 industrial units have been declared sick under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 during the period January, 2003 to April, 2006. The year-wise break-up of the cases is as below: